

The December 9, 2020, Zoom meeting opened at 4:05.

Present were Emily Eyre (Co-Chair), Pat Konecky (Co-Chair), Robin Goldberg, Juliette Haas, and Marj Wexler (acting secretary, because Corinna had a technological problem). Also present, Sharon Waskow.

Minutes of the 11/11/20 meeting were approved.

Guest: Emily introduced Sharon Waskow, a new part-time resident on Phillips Rd. Sharon formed a sustainability group in her Manhattan neighborhood: "It's Easy Being Green" (www.itseasybeinggreen.org). With committees on single-use plastics and composting, among others, it is focused on climate crisis education and personal action in the context of community.

Sustainability Coordinator: Juliette noted that the tonnage at the Transfer Station has increased, but is lower than it was in the summer. The fee required to use the construction & demolition (C&D) bin has to increase. The new price list will be in effect on Jan 1, 2021.

Old Business:

Rain Barrel Project: Emily reported that the BoS approved the project. Next step is publicity and education. The money collected for the first batch of (<32) barrels will be collected and turned over to the town, which will (we hope – Mary Brazie is looking into this) then write a check to the Great American Rain Barrel Company (GARB). Corinna is concerned about residents who can't afford a rain barrel and wondered what could be done. Pat suggested that we might encourage those purchasing barrels for \$69 consider contributing more to reduce the cost for those who can't afford them.

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program: Juliette explained that the program was introduced by the state about 18 months ago. The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) could be our "certified provider," but Juliette will look into options before the final choice is made. Two documents will be created by the town: a hazard-mitigation plan and a climate action plan. GB's excellent climate action plan can be used as a model. Step 1: Juliette will apply for an MVP planning grant, beginning in April, and Step 2: start to implement the plan. A consultant must be chosen before the grant application is written (GB used BRPC).

EGC members should consider how climate change can affect Egremont, and how to mitigate those eventualities. In planning for hazard mitigation, for example, the MVP can work with the Highway Dept to identify areas where there might be flooding, which can affect the environment and residents. The MVP committee will also seek input from residents regarding climate-change crises, which may affect them directly.

An exciting idea for the future might be the development of microgrids, which would divide Egremont into areas each with its own with battery-stored power (ideally from renewables).

Pat will forward to us Sheffield's 135-page plan.

New Business: Emily discovered a missionary group, Matthew 25, that will accept used Rx containers and send them with medications to impoverished countries. The EGC voted to endorse and support this project. Mary Brazie will allow a collection box to be in the protected area outside the door to Town Hall, and the Town will pay the postage to send full boxes.

Other Business: Subcommittees (aka working committees) don't need to be posted unless they have a quorum of EGC members.

Juliette announced that Egremont is a winner of the Commonwealth's Leading by Example award, which recognizes entities in the state that facilitate and promote state government clean energy and sustainability initiatives. The ceremony will be held virtually on Dec. 18. Juliette will write an Edge article after the event.

Robin discovered that renting live Christmas trees is sometimes an option to buying. She will research whether any local tree farms (Sweets?) might do this. Marj will find out if Blue Rider wants Christmas trees for the horses after the holidays.

Meeting adjourned 5:11 pm. Next Zoom meeting will be Wednesday, January 6, 4:00 PM.

Submitted by Marj Wexler, Acting Sec'y